

INVESTIGATING THE ANTECEDENTS OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER INTENTIONS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: EVIDENCE FROM KITWE, ZAMBIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the antecedents of employee turnover intentions in the hospitality industry in Kitwe, Zambia, with work-life balance examined as a mediating variable. Guided by Conflict Theory and Role Scarcity Theory, the study adopted a positivist paradigm and a cross-sectional survey design. Data were collected from 257 hospitality employees using a structured questionnaire and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). The measurement model demonstrated satisfactory reliability and validity, with composite reliability and AVE values exceeding 0.50. The findings revealed that job autonomy, supervisor support, and work schedule flexibility, positively influenced work-life balance. Furthermore, work-life balance significantly reduced employee turnover intentions. However, mediation analysis indicated that work-life balance did not significantly mediate the relationships between the antecedent variables and turnover intentions. The study contributes to employee retention literature by highlighting the importance of supportive workplace practices that enhance work-life balance and reduce turnover intentions in the hospitality sector.

Keywords: Employee Turnover Intentions; Work-Life Balance; Job Autonomy; Supervisor Support; Hospitality Industry

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1.0 Introduction

The hospitality industry plays a significant role in economic development, tourism, and employment generation worldwide through hotels, restaurants, lodges, and other accommodation and food service establishments (Sampaio et al., 2024). Despite its economic importance, the industry consistently records higher employee turnover rates than most sectors because of demanding working conditions, irregular working hours, emotional labour, and limited career advancement opportunities (Dogru et al., 2023; Ranti et al., 2025). High employee turnover increases recruitment and training costs, disrupts service delivery, and reduces organisational productivity and competitiveness (Yilmazdogan, 2024). Given the labour-intensive nature of hospitality, retaining skilled employees is essential for maintaining service quality and achieving organisational success (Fatawu & Atingabono, 2024).

In Zambia, the hospitality sector has expanded alongside the growth of tourism and investment in accommodation services (Zimba et al., 2024). Tourism contributes approximately 7% to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provides employment for more than 473,000 people (ZIPAR, 2020), highlighting the sector's strategic importance. However, employee retention remains a major challenge due to demanding work schedules, heavy workloads, limited job autonomy, and inadequate organisational support, all of which contribute to work-life conflict and increased turnover intentions (Mohammed et al., 2023; Mwiya et al., 2022; Shikaputo et al., 2026).

Employee turnover intention refers to an employee's conscious willingness to leave an organisation and is widely recognised as the strongest predictor of actual turnover (Lim & Parker, 2020). Previous studies identify workplace factors such as job autonomy, supervisor support, and work schedule flexibility as important determinants of employee well-being and retention (Darmawan & Alawiyah, 2024; Puhakka et al., 2021). Employees who experience supportive supervision, greater autonomy, and flexible work schedules generally report better work-life balance, higher job satisfaction, and stronger organisational commitment, thereby reducing their intention to leave (Athamneh & Guerra, 2023; Hajizadeh et al., 2025; Sekhar & Patwardhan, 2023; Tan et al., 2024). Consequently, work-life balance has increasingly been recognised as a potential mechanism linking workplace conditions to employee turnover intentions (Rashmi & Kataria, 2023).

Despite growing research on employee turnover, empirical evidence from developing countries, particularly Zambia's hospitality industry, remains limited (Qadri et al., 2022). Most existing studies have been conducted in developed economies and selected Asian countries (Jiang et al., 2024; Tan et al., 2024), while Zambian studies have largely focused on other sectors and have rarely examined the combined influence of workplace factors through work-life balance (Mweetwa & Chipindi, 2025; Mwiya & Chanda, 2022). Furthermore, systematic reviews have recommended examining contextual workplace factors alongside mediating mechanisms to better explain employee turnover behaviour (Rashmi & Kataria, 2022; Wanyama et al., 2025).

This study addresses these gaps by examining the combined effects of job autonomy, supervisor support, and work schedule flexibility on employee turnover intentions through work-life balance among hospitality employees in Kitwe, Zambia, using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Beyond providing evidence from an under-researched African context, the study contributes theoretically by demonstrating that work-life balance does not significantly mediate these relationships, suggesting that employee retention mechanisms in developing economies may differ from those reported in previous studies. It may instead operate through alternative pathways such as job satisfaction or organisational commitment.

2.0 Literature Review

Employee turnover intention has received considerable attention in organisational behaviour and human resource management literature due to its significant implications for organisational productivity and workforce stability. Turnover intention refers to an employee's conscious and deliberate willingness to leave their current organisation within a particular period (Lazzari et al., 2022). From a psychological perspective, turnover intention is considered a cognitive process through which employees evaluate their job satisfaction, organisational support, and career opportunities before deciding whether to remain with or leave their employer (Faridah et al., 2022; Jogi et al., 2025). The Theory of Planned Behaviour suggests that behavioural intention is the strongest predictor of actual behaviour, implying that employees who develop strong intentions to leave their organisations are more likely to eventually resign (Abet et al., 2024; Mwiya et al., 2017).

Several studies indicate that negative workplace experiences such as perceived organisational injustice, limited career development opportunities, and lack of recognition significantly increase employees' turnover intentions (Addae & Boso, 2021; Daisy & Kuok, 2021; Wanyama et al., 2025). In addition, organisational culture plays a crucial role in shaping employee attitudes and behaviour. Supportive organisational cultures characterised by fairness, open communication, and positive leadership practices tend to enhance employee commitment and reduce turnover intentions, whereas toxic workplace environments often lead to dissatisfaction and higher employee attrition (Bou et al., 2025; Tegar et al., 2024). Beyond individual and organisational culture influences, contextual workplace factors also play a critical role in determining employees' turnover intentions. Contextual factors refer to situational conditions within the work environment, including leadership style, job design, work relationships, workload, and organisational policies (Choongo et al., 2025; Hernaus et al., 2026). Empirical studies indicate that employees who work in supportive environments characterised by fair treatment, supervisor support, and opportunities for professional development are less likely to develop intentions to leave their organisations (Afzal et al., 2019; Wanyama et al., 2025).

Conversely, unfavourable workplace conditions such as excessive workloads, poor communication, and limited job autonomy often lead to employee dissatisfaction and increased turnover intentions (Mayesti et al., 2025; Rahmansyah & Indiyati, 2024). Several international studies conducted in developed and developing countries have

further identified work-life balance, compensation, job satisfaction, and organisational support as important determinants of employee retention (Chaudhuri et al., 2020; Farheen & Omar, 2025; Hassan, 2022). In the African context, research conducted in countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, and Tanzania has also emphasised the importance of organisational support and favourable working conditions in influencing employees' decisions to remain in or leave their organisations (Diana, 2025; Ikyanyon et al., 2020; Lomotey, 2025). However, empirical evidence on the antecedents of employee turnover intentions in Kitwe, Zambia's hospitality sector, remains limited, underscoring the need for further research.

2.1 Theoretical Background

This study is underpinned by Conflict Theory and Role Scarcity Theory, which jointly explain the structural workplace conditions and competing role demands associated with work-life balance and employee turnover intentions. Although Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model are relevant to employee turnover research, they were not selected as the primary theoretical lenses. SET primarily explains employee attitudes through reciprocal exchanges between employees and organisations, making it particularly relevant to supervisor support. Similarly, the JD-R model explains how job demands and resources influence employee well-being, engagement, and burnout. However, the present study focuses more specifically on workplace power and resource inequalities and on competition between work and personal roles. Conflict Theory and Role Scarcity Theory therefore provide a more focused theoretical foundation for the study's constructs and the Zambian hospitality context.

2.1.1 Conflict Theory

Conflict Theory views society as a system characterised by unequal distribution of resources, power, and opportunities among different groups. The theory suggests that workplace relationships are influenced by power imbalances between management and employees, where unequal access to resources, limited participation in decision-making, and perceived unfairness may generate dissatisfaction and negative work outcomes (Monyei et al., 2023; Prayogi, 2023). In organisational contexts, these inequalities can shape employees' attitudes, commitment, and intentions to leave their organisations (Clercq et al., 2021; Dosunmu & Dichaba, 2023). This study applies Conflict Theory to explain how workplace power dynamics and resource inequalities within hospitality establishments in Kitwe, Zambia, may influence employee turnover intentions.

2.1.2 Role Scarcity Theory

Role Scarcity Theory, introduced by Goode (1960), explains that individuals experience stress when multiple role demands compete for limited resources such as time, energy, and psychological capacity. The theory suggests that conflicting responsibilities between work and personal life can create role strain, negatively affecting employee well-being and workplace outcomes. In organisational research, it has been applied to explain work-life conflict, burnout, and turnover intentions,

particularly in demanding sectors such as hospitality (Khumalo & Olaleye, 2025; Shinde, 2025). However, limited studies have examined its application within developing country contexts. Therefore, this study applies Role Scarcity Theory to explain how competing work and personal demands influence work-life balance and subsequently shape employee turnover intentions in Zambia's hospitality industry.

2.2 Hypotheses Development

In light of the foregoing theoretical background and the identified gaps in the literature, this study examines the relationships among work schedule flexibility, job autonomy, supervisor support, employee turnover intentions, and the mediating role of work-life balance.

2.2.1 Work Schedule Flexibility and Work-Life Balance

Work schedule flexibility refers to organisational practices that allow employees to adjust their working hours to accommodate personal and family responsibilities while meeting work demands (Suifan et al., 2016). Flexible arrangements enhance employees' control over when and how they perform their duties, thereby reducing role conflict and improving work-life balance (Kumar et al., 2023). This is particularly relevant in the hospitality industry, where long working hours and irregular shifts often create challenges in managing personal and professional responsibilities. Previous studies indicate that supportive flexible scheduling practices improve employee well-being, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment (Björntoft et al., 2020; Dousin et al., 2021). Although evidence on its direct influence on turnover intentions remains mixed, flexibility has been shown to indirectly reduce turnover through improved work-life balance and employee attitudes (Jiejing et al., 2024; Rago et al., 2025). Therefore, the first hypothesis is as follows:

H₁: Work schedule flexibility positively influences employees' work-life balance.

2.2.2 Job Autonomy and Work-Life Balance

Job autonomy refers to the degree of freedom and discretion employees have in making decisions and managing their work tasks (Khoshnaw & Alavi, 2020; Zampetakis & Lanivich, 2024). It enables employees to exercise greater control over their responsibilities, align work demands with personal needs, and reduce work-related stress. Employees with higher autonomy often experience increased motivation, engagement, and psychological ownership, which enhances their ability to achieve work-life balance (Kim & Beehr, 2022; Mwiya et al., 2019). Empirical studies indicate that job autonomy reduces role strain, buffers job stress, and positively influences work-life balance by allowing employees to manage competing work and personal demands effectively (Kim & Beehr, 2022; Novianti & Fuadiputra, 2021). Therefore, a supportive organisational environment that promotes autonomy can enhance employee well-being and retention (Sarmah et al., 2022). Hence, the second hypothesis is that:

H₂: Job autonomy positively influences employees' work-life balance.

2.2.3 Supervisor Support and Work-Life Balance

Supervisor support refers to employees' perceptions that their supervisors provide assistance, understanding, and responsiveness to their professional and personal needs (Imam et al., 2023). Supportive supervisors offer guidance, encouragement, and flexibility, enabling employees to manage workplace demands effectively (Gerald et al., 2024). In the hospitality industry, where employees often experience high workloads and irregular schedules, supervisor support is essential in reducing work-related stress and enhancing work-life balance. Empirical studies indicate that supportive leadership practices improve employees' ability to manage competing work and personal responsibilities (Mazzetti & Schaufeli, 2022; Medhn & Mulie, 2024). Furthermore, employees who perceive higher supervisor support report better work-life balance and job satisfaction (Roy et al., 2025; Wani, 2023). Therefore, the third set of hypotheses is as follows:

H₃: Supervisor support positively influences employees' work-life balance.

2.2.4 Work-Life Balance and Employee Turnover Intentions

Work-life balance (WLB) refers to employees' ability to effectively manage work responsibilities alongside personal and family demands while minimising role conflict (Brough et al., 2020). In demanding sectors such as hospitality, poor WLB often results in stress, emotional exhaustion, reduced job satisfaction, and increased intentions to leave the organisation (Hameli et al., 2024; Salama et al., 2022). Conversely, employees who experience balanced workloads and adequate personal time are more likely to demonstrate organisational commitment and lower turnover intentions (Shaikh & Wajidi, 2021). Previous studies further indicate that supportive work-life practices enhance employee engagement and loyalty, thereby reducing the likelihood of turnover (Ahmed et al., 2025). Therefore, WLB is considered an important mechanism for improving employee retention and organisational stability. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₄: Work-life balance significantly influences employee turnover intentions.

2.2.5 The mediating role of Work-Life Balance

Work-life balance (WLB) is increasingly recognised as an important mechanism through which workplace conditions influence employee turnover intentions. Drawing on Role Scarcity Theory, employees who experience excessive work demands may struggle to effectively manage competing work and personal responsibilities, resulting in stress, dissatisfaction, and intentions to leave. Supportive workplace practices, such as supervisor support, job autonomy, and flexible work schedules, can enhance employees' ability to achieve work-life balance and reduce turnover intentions (Rashmi & Kataria, 2023). Previous studies indicate that WLB transmits the effects of organisational support and job resources on employee outcomes by improving satisfaction, commitment, and psychological well-being (Shakoor et al., 2023; Thuy & Wu, 2025). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₅: Work-life balance significantly mediates the relationship between employee turnover intentions and its antecedents.

3.0 Research Methodology

Population, unit of analysis, and sample

This study adopted a quantitative approach within a positivist paradigm and employed an explanatory cross-sectional survey design to examine the hypothesised relationships (Creswell, 2014; Mwiya, 2026). The unit of analysis comprised individual employees working in hospitality establishments in Kitwe, Zambia. The target population was estimated at 20,000 employees across hotels, lodges, guest houses, restaurants, motels, and bars/nightclubs. Based on the Raosoft sample size calculator, 377 respondents were recommended at a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error (Raosoft, 2026). However, organisational access restrictions, varying employee work schedules, and non-response resulted in 257 usable questionnaires. Consequently, the achieved sample implies a margin of error greater than 5%, which reduces population-level precision and requires caution when generalising the findings to all hospitality employees in Kitwe. Nevertheless, the sample exceeded the minimum requirement for PLS-SEM model estimation (Chawala et al., 2022; Marcoulides & Chin, 2013).

Convenience sampling was employed because no comprehensive sampling frame of hospitality employees was available. Participating establishments were approached based on accessibility and management permission. Within accessible establishments, employees who were available during data collection, met the study eligibility criteria, and voluntarily consented to participate were invited to complete either electronic or hardcopy questionnaires. Efforts were made to obtain responses from different hospitality subsectors and employee categories to improve sample diversity. However, the non-probability sampling procedure limits statistical representativeness and generalisability. The resulting sample profile is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Profile

Variable	Description	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Gender	Female	145	56.4	56.4	56.4
	Male	112	43.6	43.6	100.0
Age-group	16-20 years	47	18.3	18.3	18.3
	21-25 years	58	22.6	22.6	40.9
	26-35 years	73	28.4	28.4	69.3
	36-44 years	43	16.7	16.7	86.0
	Above 45	36	14.0	14.0	100.0
Marital Status	Single	165	64.2	64.2	64.2
	Married	92	35.8	35.8	100.0
Level of Education	Primary school	3	1.2	1.2	1.2
	Secondary school	104	40.4	40.4	41.6
	College	109	42.4	42.4	84.0
	University	41	16.0	16.0	100.0
Occupation	Full time employee	109	42.4	42.4	42.4
	Part-time employee	115	44.7	44.7	87.2
	Casual/Temporary	33	12.8	12.8	100.0
Monthly Income	Below K2,500	86	33.5	33.5	33.5
	K2,501-5,000	87	33.9	33.9	67.3
	K5,001-10,000	43	16.7	16.7	84.0
	K10,001-15,000	18	6.2	6.2	90.3
	Above K15,000	25	9.7	9.7	100.0
Type of Hospitality	Hotel	53	20.6	20.6	20.6
	Motel	6	2.3	2.3	23.0
	Lodge	63	24.5	24.5	47.5
	Guest House	50	19.5	19.5	66.9
	Restaurant	58	22.6	22.6	89.5
	Bar/Night club	27	10.5	10.5	100.0
Main Business Client	Individuals	146	56.8	56.8	56.8
	Private firms	61	23.7	23.7	80.5
	Mines	6	2.3	2.3	82.9
	Parastatals	2	0.8	0.8	83.7
	Government	42	16.3	16.3	100.0
Establishment of Firm	1-5 years	48	18.7	18.7	18.7
	6-10 years	59	23.0	23.0	41.6
	11-15 years	72	28.0	28.0	69.6
	15-20 years	40	15.6	15.6	85.2
	More than 21 years	38	14.8	14.8	100.0

Alt Text: Sample Profile reflecting characteristics such as gender, age group, marital status, qualifications, occupation, income, type of hospitality, business client and establishment of firm for 257 respondents.

Data analysis method

The data were analysed using variance-based Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS. PLS-SEM was selected because it is appropriate for predictive research involving complex models with multiple latent constructs and relatively small sample sizes, while requiring fewer assumptions about data normality than covariance-based SEM (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler, 2018; Mwiya et al., 2026). The analysis followed a two-stage procedure comprising measurement model assessment and structural model evaluation. The measurement model was evaluated using indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE), the Fornell-Larcker criterion, the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio, and the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The structural model was assessed through bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples to estimate path coefficients, t-values, p-values, R^2 , f^2 , Q^2 , and the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). The sample size of 257 exceeded the minimum requirement under the PLS-SEM ten-times rule, ensuring adequate statistical power and reliable model estimation (Marcoulides & Chin, 2013).

4.0 Results

Preliminary Statistical Checks for Data Distribution

The measurement model was assessed to evaluate the reliability and validity of the constructs using their respective reflective indicators. The study adapted measurement scales from previous empirical studies adapted from Suifan et al. (2016), Fayyazi & Aslani (2015), and employee turnover intentions and Huang et al. (2007). Thus, five constructs comprising 23 reflective indicators were evaluated using indicator loadings, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity assessments.

To address potential common method bias (CMB), both procedural and statistical remedies were applied. Procedural measures included ensuring respondent anonymity, improving item clarity, and separating measurement items conceptually, while statistical assessments involved Harman's single-factor test and marker variable techniques (Podsakoff et al., 2024). The Harman single-factor test indicated that the first factor accounted for 47.3% of the total variance, which is below the recommended threshold of 50%, suggesting that common method bias was not a critical concern (Pangarso et al., 2020).

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was conducted using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with and without Varimax rotation. The results confirmed the suitability of the data for factor analysis, with Bartlett's Test of Sphericity being significant ($\chi^2 = 6687$, $df = 253$, $p < 0.001$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.931, indicating excellent sampling adequacy (Kaiser, 1974). These findings suggest that the correlation matrix was appropriate for factor analysis, as recommended by Mwiya (2012), thereby confirming the adequacy of the dataset for subsequent multivariate analysis. The questionnaire items are presented in Appendix 1.

Table 2: Harman single-factor test, Total Variance Explained

Component	Eigenvalue	Variance proportion	Variance cumulative
1	10.884	0.473	0.473
1	3.484	0.151	0.625
3	2.869	0.125	0.749
4	1.366	0.059	0.809
5	0.781	0.034	0.843
6	0.478	0.021	0.864
7	0.450	0.020	0.883
8	0.342	0.015	0.898
9	0.315	0.014	0.912
10	0.254	0.011	0.923
11	0.224	0.010	0.932
12	0.212	0.009	0.942
13	0.198	0.009	0.950
14	0.156	0.007	0.957
15	0.145	0.006	0.963
16	0.138	0.006	0.969
17	0.129	0.006	0.975
18	0.126	0.005	0.980
19	0.108	0.005	0.985
20	0.098	0.004	0.989
21	0.089	0.004	0.993
22	0.081	0.004	0.997
23	0.074	0.003	1.000

Alt Text: Table of Harman's single-factor test showing total variance explained. Results indicate that a single factor does not account for the majority of variance, supporting the absence of common method bias.

Testing for normality was conducted to assess data distribution, although it is not a strict requirement for variance-based PLS-SEM (Zulkifli et al., 2023). Skewness values ranged from -0.791 to 1.024, while kurtosis values ranged from -1.075 to 0.185, falling within the recommended thresholds of ± 2 and ± 7 , respectively (George & Mallery, 2024; Hair et al., 2021). These results indicate that the data were approximately normally distributed and suitable for further analysis. Moreover, the robustness of PLS-SEM allows reliable estimation even when data deviate from normality assumptions (Henseler et al., 2015).

Construct validity test results

The current study evaluated the reliability and convergent validity of constructs using several metrics. Composite reliability values for all constructs ranged from 0.907 to 0.971, indicating that internal consistency was within the acceptable range. The average variance extracted (see Table 3), which measures convergent validity by

the squared loadings of items, displayed values between 0.764 and 0.894 for all variables, exceeding the threshold of 0.5 and confirming sufficient explanatory power of the constructs (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 3: Convergent Validity and Reliability

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted
Employee Turnover Intentions	0.965	0.971	0.850
Job Autonomy	0.961	0.971	0.894
Supervisor Support	0.961	0.969	0.837
Work Schedule Flexibility	0.909	0.938	0.792
Work-Life Balance	0.846	0.907	0.764

Alt Text: Table reporting convergent validity and reliability results. Factor loadings are high, average variance extracted exceeds the threshold, and composite reliability values confirm internal consistency.

The final measurement model involved 23 reflective indicators. Before this, and based on factor loadings, all items were retained to enhance model robustness; therefore, this refinement process sought to ensure that each item's loading exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.5 (Benitez et al., 2020), thereby contributing positively to construct validity (see Table 4) since the loadings range from 0.739 to 0.956.

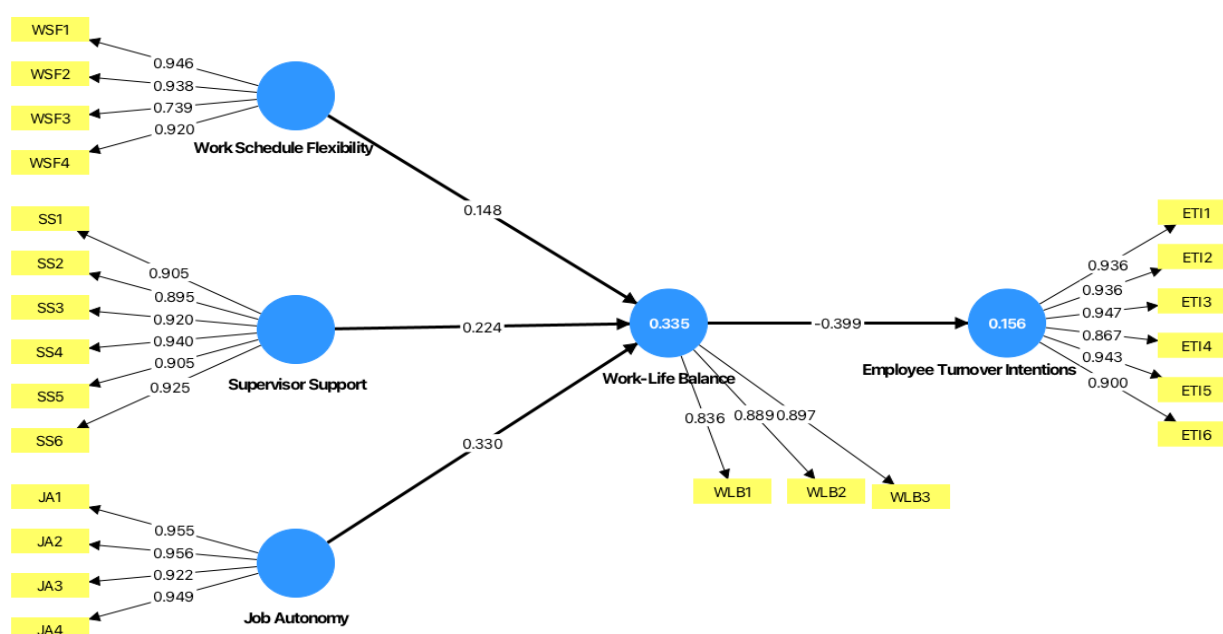
Table 4: Analyses of Outer loadings

Construct	Items	Outer loadings
Employee Turnover Intentions	ETI1	0.936
	ETI2	0.936
	ETI3	0.947
	ETI4	0.867
	ETI5	0.943
	ETI6	0.900
Job Autonomy	JA1	0.955
	JA2	0.956
	JA3	0.922
	JA4	0.949
Supervisor Support	SS1	0.905
	SS2	0.895
	SS3	0.920
	SS4	0.940
	SS5	0.905
	SS6	0.925
Work-Life Balance	WLB1	0.836

	WLB2	0.889
	WLB3	0.897
	WSF1	0.946
Work Schedule Flexibility	WSF2	0.938
	WSF3	0.739
	WSF4	0.920

Alt Text: Table presenting analyses of outer loadings for measurement items. All loadings exceed recommended thresholds, confirming indicator reliability and supporting construct validity.

Figure 1 illustrates the measurement model post-refinement, displaying the constructs after adjustments based on the PLS-SEM analysis. This visual representation confirms the structural integrity and validity of the refined model, ensuring that all remaining indicators robustly represent their respective constructs.



Alt Text: Structural equation model diagram with five latent variables (work schedule flexibility, supervisor support, job autonomy, work-life balance, employee turnover intentions) linked to their observed indicators with loadings between 0.739 and 0.956.

Figure 1. Measurement Model

Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency of a group of items, indicating how closely related they are to one another. Values between 0.846 and 0.965 are considered valid to ensure internal consistency (Benitez et al., 2020; George & Mallery, 2024). Figure 1 shows the model indicators with the accepted threshold (see also Table 4). Furthermore, items and constructs with a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) greater than 5 may indicate multicollinearity (Mwiya et al., 2024). However, as detailed in Table 5, the VIF scores for all constructs remained lower than the threshold of concern. Specifically, the VIF scores were between 1.000 and 2.946,

which were comfortably within the acceptable range, suggesting that multicollinearity was not an issue (Hair et al., 2019; Magno et al., 2024).

Table 5: Multi-Collinearity Test (VIF)

	VIF
Job Autonomy	2.946
Supervisor Support	1.199
Work Schedule Flexibility	2.873
Work-Life Balance	1.000

Alt Text: Table displaying results of the multicollinearity test using VIF values. All variance inflation factors fall below accepted thresholds, indicating no multicollinearity concerns among the constructs.

Discriminant Validity Test Results

Discriminant validity (DV) measures the extent to which a given construct is distinct from other constructs within the model, i.e. it is vital to ensure that a construct uniquely represents specific phenomena not covered by other constructs (Benitez et al., 2020). In this regard, the Fornell-Lacker criterion (Table 6) shows that the squared AVE on each column is consistently greater than the correlations below, signifying discriminant validity (Magno et al., 2024).

Table 6: Discriminant Validity Fornell-Lacker Criterion

Construct	ETI	JA	SS	WSF	WLB
Employee Turnover Intentions	0.922				
Job Autonomy	-0.416	0.946			
Supervisor Support	-0.439	0.399	0.915		
Work Schedule Flexibility	-0.384	0.806	0.371	0.890	
Work-Life Balance	-0.399	0.538	0.410	0.496	0.874

Alt Text: Table presenting discriminant validity results using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Diagonal values of average variance extracted are higher than inter-construct correlations, confirming discriminant validity among the constructs.

The Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations is a modern method for evaluating discriminant validity. It compares the correlations between measures of theoretically different constructs (heterotrait) with the correlations of measures within the same construct, i.e., monotrait (Hair et al., 2019). An HTMT value below 0.90 is typically recognised as evidence of discriminant validity (Benitez et al., 2020; Henseler, 2018). Table 7 outlines the HTMT ratios, which act as indicators of discriminant validity between constructs. The highest HTMT value was 0.856, remaining below the widely accepted cut-off point of 0.90. This result supports the constructs' uniqueness within the model, confirming their discriminant validity

according to the heuristic benchmarks and reinforcing the constructs' definitional clarity in the research design (see Table 7).

Table 7 Discriminant Validity Via Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT)

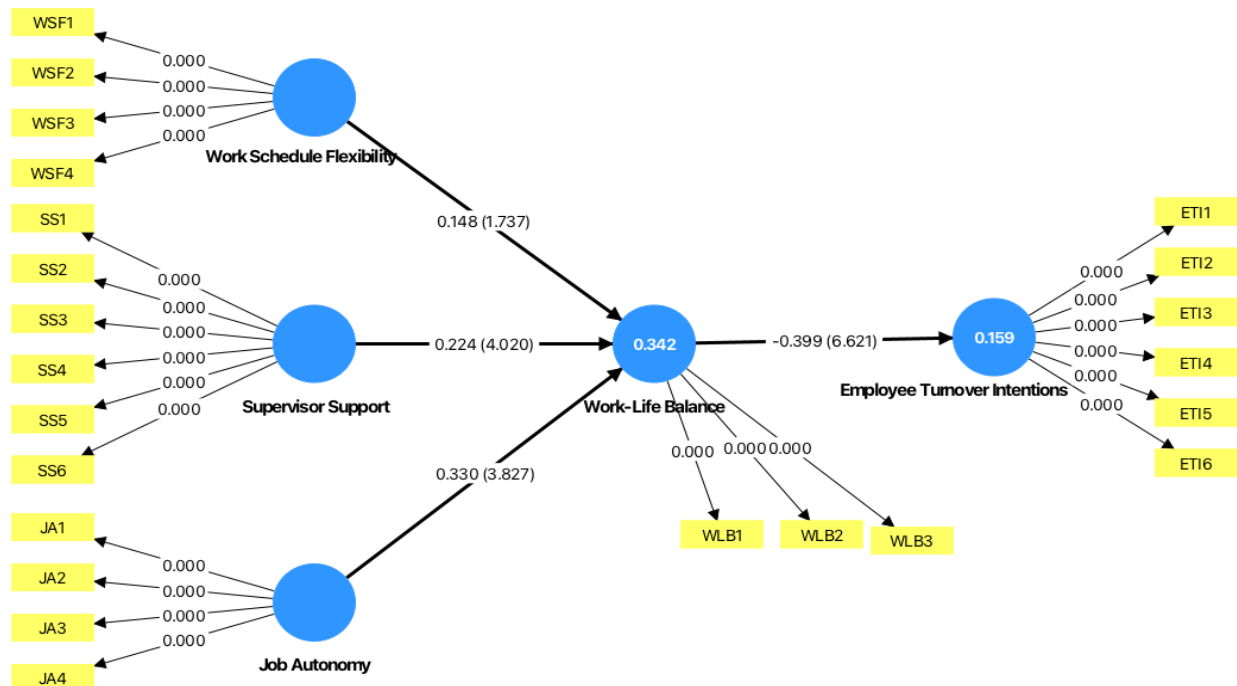
Construct	ETI	JA	SS	WSF	WLB
Employee Turnover Intentions					
Job Autonomy	0.430				
Supervisor Support	0.454	0.410			
Work Schedule Flexibility	0.402	0.856	0.392		
Work-Life Balance	0.436	0.594	0.451	0.561	

Alt Text: Table presenting discriminant validity results using the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) criterion. All HTMT values fall below recommended thresholds, confirming discriminant validity among the constructs.

Lastly, to further check for discriminant validity besides the HTMT and Fornell-Lacker criterion in Tables 6 and 7, cross-loadings above 0.10 differences are usually good enough.

Interpretation of hypothesis testing outcomes

The hypothesis testing results, illustrated in Figure 2 and detailed in Table 8, conform to the standard that a hypothesis is supported when the t-value surpasses 1.65 or when the p-value falls below 0.10 (Hair et al., 2019).



Alt Text: Structural equation model diagram with five latent variables (Its Antecedent, WLB, ETI) linked to observed indicators. Arrows show significant positive

paths between work schedule flexibility, supervisor support, job autonomy, work-life balance and employee turnover intentions.

Figure 2: Structural Model

Figure 2 shows that most t-values are greater than 1.65, indicating statistical significance. The finding is consistent with the path coefficients presented in Table 8, showing that job autonomy positively influences work-life balance ($\beta = 0.330$, $t = 3.827$, $p = 0.000$). Similarly, the relationship between supervisor support and work-life balance is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.224$, $t = 4.020$, $p = 0.000$). Work schedule flexibility also positively influences work-life balance ($\beta = 0.148$, $t = 1.737$, $p < 0.082$) at 10% significance level, while work-life balance is negative and statistically significant on employee turnover intentions ($\beta = -0.399$, $t = 6.621$, $p = 0.00$). Overall, the results highlight the important role of work-life balance.

Table 8: Path Coefficients in the Structural Model

Path	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Job Autonomy -> Work-Life Balance	0.330	0.326	0.086	3.827	0.000
Supervisor Support -> Work-Life Balance	0.224	0.225	0.056	4.020	0.000
Work Schedule Flexibility -> Work-Life Balance	0.148	0.153	0.085	1.737	0.082
Work-Life Balance -> Employee Turnover Intentions	-0.399	-0.403	0.060	6.621	0.000

Alt Text: Table presenting path coefficients in the structural model. All reported paths are statistically significant, indicating meaningful relationships among the latent constructs.

Table 9 showcases the model fit statistics, including important measures such as R^2 , f^2 , Q^2 and SRMR values. These statistics offer valuable insights into the model's explanatory power, as well as its predictive relevance, highlighting its potential effectiveness in forecasting outcomes.

Table 9 R-Squared, Effect Size, Predictive Relevance and Model Fit

Path	R ²	R ² adj	Effect Size F ²	Predictive Relevance Q ²	Model fit (SRMR)
Work-Life Balance	0.342	0.335		0.325	
Employee Turnover Intentions	0.159	0.156		0.177	
Job Autonomy -> Work-Life Balance			0.056		
Supervisor Support -> Work-Life Balance			0.064		
Work Schedule Flexibility -> Work-Life Balance			0.012		
Work-Life Balance -> Employee Turnover Intentions			0.189		
Antecedents -> Work-Life Balance -> Employee Turnover Intentions					0.043

Alt Text: Table presenting structural model results including R-squared values, effect sizes, predictive relevance (Q²), and overall model fit indices. Reported values meet recommended thresholds, supporting explanatory power, predictive accuracy, and acceptable model fit.

The structural model assessment provided insights into the model's explanatory power, predictive relevance, and goodness of fit. The coefficient of determination (R²) indicates the proportion of variance in endogenous constructs explained by predictor variables (Hair et al., 2019). Based on Chin & Marcoulides (1998), R² values of 0.26, 0.13, and 0.02 represent large, moderate, and weak explanatory power, respectively. In this study, work-life balance recorded an R² value of 0.342 (adjusted R² = 0.335), indicating that 34.2% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by the model, suggesting a large explanatory capacity.

Other effect sizes, as measured by f-squared, reveal varying influences of different factors within the model when a particular variable is removed; f² as an effect size, measures how the removal of a predictor variable affects R² for an endogenous variable. Usually, 0.02 is a small, 0.15 a moderate and 0.35 a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). The effect size (f²) analysis showed that job autonomy (f² = 0.056), supervisor support (f² = 0.064), and work schedule flexibility (f² = 0.012) had varying contributions toward explaining work-life balance. Furthermore, work-life balance demonstrated a moderate effect on employee turnover intentions (f² = 0.189), confirming its practical importance in predicting employee retention outcomes (Cohen, 1988).

The predictive relevance assessment showed that the model had satisfactory predictive capability, as both endogenous constructs produced Q²>0 values greater than zero. Work-life balance recorded Q² = 0.325, while employee turnover intentions recorded Q² = 0.177, indicating strong and moderate predictive relevance, respectively (Henseler, 2018; Mwiya et al., 2026). Finally, the model demonstrated excellent fit, with an SRMR value of 0.043, which falls below the recommended threshold of 0.05 (Grosemans et al., 2020; Kyndt & Onghena, 2014). These findings confirm the robustness and predictive adequacy of the proposed model.

Mediation results

Mediation analysis was conducted to determine whether work-life balance (WLB) explains the mechanism through which job autonomy, supervisor support, and work schedule flexibility influence employee turnover intentions (ETI). Following Hayes (2018), the analysis examined the direct, indirect, and total effects using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS.

The results in Table 10 indicate that work-life balance did not significantly mediate the relationship between the antecedent variables and employee turnover intentions. For work schedule flexibility (WSF), the total effect on turnover intentions was insignificant ($\beta = -0.096$, $p = 0.335$), although the direct effect was significant ($\beta = -0.161$, $p = 0.036$). The indirect effect through work-life balance was insignificant ($\beta = -0.023$, $p = 0.237$), with a VAF value of 23.9%, indicating that only a small proportion of the relationship was transmitted through WLB. Similarly, supervisor support (SS) demonstrated a significant negative total effect on turnover intentions ($\beta = -0.320$, $p < 0.001$) and a significant direct effect ($\beta = -0.284$, $p < 0.001$). However, the indirect effect through work-life balance was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.036$, $p = 0.090$). The VAF value of 11.3% suggests that WLB contributed minimally to explaining the relationship between supervisor support and turnover intentions.

For job autonomy (JA), the total effect on turnover intentions was significant ($\beta = -0.212$, $p = 0.030$), while the direct effect was insignificant ($\beta = -0.158$, $p = 0.118$). Although the indirect effect through work-life balance approached significance ($\beta = -0.053$, $p = 0.055$), it did not meet the required significance threshold. The VAF value of 25.0% indicates partial transmission; however, the absence of a significant indirect effect means mediation was not supported. Overall, the findings suggest that while work-life balance directly reduces employee turnover intentions, it does not significantly explain how job autonomy, supervisor support, or work schedule flexibility influence turnover intentions.

Table 10: Mediation results

Path	Total effect	Direct effect	Indirect effect	P-Values	boot LLCI	boot ULCI	VAF	Hypotheses
WSF -> ETI (c')		-0.161		0.036	-0.303	0.001		
WSF -> ETI(c)	-0.096			0.335	-0.288	0.101		
WSF ->WLB -> ETI (ab)			-0.023	0.237	-0.078	0.002	23.9%	NS
SS -> ETI (c')		-0.284		0.000	-0.411	0.165		
SS -> ETI (c)	-0.320			0.000	-0.436	0.204		
SS ->WLB-> ETI (ab)			-0.036	0.090	-0.087	0.002	11.3%	S
JA -> ETI (c')		-0.158		0.118	-0.351	0.042		
JA -> ETI (c)	-0.212			0.030	-0.395	0.019		
JA ->WLB -> ETI (ab)			-0.053	0.055	-0.119	0.007	25.0%	S

Alt Text: Table presenting the mediation analysis results. The indirect effects are not statistically significant, indicating the absence of mediation effects among the constructs.

5.0 Discussion and Implications

The findings of this study generally support existing literature, demonstrating that favourable workplace conditions enhance work-life balance and subsequently reduce employee turnover intentions. The results confirm that job autonomy, supervisor support, and work schedule flexibility positively influence work-life balance. Employees who experience greater autonomy are better able to manage competing work and personal responsibilities, thereby achieving improved balance between professional and private life (Omega & Napitupulu, 2025; Otoo, 2024). Similarly, supervisor support significantly enhances work-life balance, reinforcing previous evidence that supportive and empathetic supervisors help employees manage workplace demands and reduce stress (Tarek et al., 2025; Yadav & Bagri, 2026).

The study further established that work schedule flexibility positively influences work-life balance, although the relationship was significant at the 10% level. This finding supports previous research indicating that flexible working arrangements enable employees to coordinate work and family responsibilities more effectively, reducing work-life conflict (Choudhary & Brookes, 2025). Additionally, work-life balance was found to significantly reduce employee turnover intentions, suggesting that employees who achieve better balance are less likely to consider leaving their organisations. This aligns with prior studies showing that work-life balance improves employee well-being, satisfaction, and organisational commitment while reducing intentions to quit (Nguyen & La, 2026; Thuy & Wu, 2025).

However, WLB did not significantly mediate the relationships between job autonomy, supervisor support, work schedule flexibility, and turnover intentions. Theoretically, this finding suggests a potential contextual boundary to the explanatory mechanism implied by Role Scarcity Theory. Although autonomy, supportive supervision, and flexibility may conserve employees' limited time and psychological resources and consequently improve WLB, improved balance may not necessarily constitute the principal pathway through which these workplace resources influence turnover decisions. In Zambia's hospitality context, economic pressures, employment insecurity, relatively limited alternative employment opportunities, and wage considerations may weaken the translation of WLB experiences into actual intentions to leave. Employees may therefore remain with an organisation despite work-life difficulties because the economic costs and uncertainty associated with changing employment can outweigh dissatisfaction arising from role imbalance.

From a Conflict Theory perspective, this finding further suggests that structural inequalities and employees' relatively limited bargaining power may constrain their ability to respond to unfavourable workplace conditions through voluntary exit. Consequently, turnover intentions may be shaped not only by employees' capacity to balance work and personal roles but also by perceived employment alternatives, economic security, organisational dependence, and employment conditions. The

insignificant mediation therefore does not imply that WLB is unimportant; rather, its significant direct relationship with turnover intentions indicates that it matters independently without transmitting the effects of all three workplace antecedents. Alternative mechanisms, including job satisfaction, organisational commitment, employee engagement, and perceived organisational support, should therefore be investigated.

Practically, hospitality organisations should strengthen job autonomy, supportive supervision, and feasible flexible scheduling while recognising that retention strategies should extend beyond WLB. Managers should also address broader employment conditions, employee development, recognition, and job security. Future research should test alternative mediators and examine whether these mechanisms differ across hotels, restaurants, lodges, and other hospitality subsectors.

6.0 Limitations and future research

This study has several limitations. First, its cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships among the study variables. Second, convenience sampling may have introduced selection bias and limits the representativeness and generalisability of the findings. Third, the study was confined to hospitality employees in Kitwe, Zambia, which may restrict applicability to other geographical contexts. Although respondents were drawn from different hospitality sub-sectors, including hotels, restaurants, lodges, guest houses, motels, and bars/nightclubs, differences in turnover antecedents across these groups were not statistically examined. A full PLS multigroup analysis (PLS-MGA) was not undertaken because some sub-sector groups had relatively small sample sizes, particularly motels and bars/nightclubs, which could produce unstable group-specific estimates and reduce the reliability of comparisons. Nevertheless, working conditions, scheduling practices, supervisory relationships, workloads, and employee autonomy may vary across hospitality establishments and could therefore influence turnover intentions differently. Future studies should employ larger, stratified samples to enable robust PLS-MGA comparisons across hospitality sub-sectors. Longitudinal and probability-based studies should also examine alternative mediators, including job satisfaction, organisational commitment, employee engagement, and perceived organisational support.

7.0 Conclusion

This study examined the antecedents of employee turnover intentions in the hospitality industry in Kitwe, Zambia, using data from 257 employees. The findings demonstrate that job autonomy, supervisor support, and work schedule flexibility significantly enhance work-life balance, with job autonomy showing the strongest influence. Furthermore, work-life balance negatively predicts turnover intentions, indicating that employees with better balance are less likely to consider leaving their organisations. However, work-life balance did not significantly mediate the relationship between workplace factors and turnover intentions, suggesting the presence of other explanatory mechanisms. The study extends turnover literature by providing empirical evidence from an under-researched African context and

highlights the need for future research to examine additional psychological and organisational factors influencing employee retention.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire Items and Sources

Variables	Descriptions	Sources
Work Schedule Flexibility	WSF_1 I have the freedom to vary my work schedule (or the shift I work on).	(Suifan et al., 2016)
	WSF_2 I can change the start and finish time (or the shift)—if needed.	
	WSF_3 I can easily switch shifts with my colleagues.	
	WSF_4 I have a say when it comes to my work schedule	
Supervisor Support	SS_1 My supervisor is supportive when I have a work problem.	(Suifan et al., 2016)
	SS_2 My supervisor is fair and doesn't show favouritism in responding to employees' personal or family needs	
	SS_3 My supervisor accommodates me when I have family or personal business to take care of	
	SS_4 My supervisor is understanding when I talk about personal or family issues that affect my work	
	SS_5 I feel comfortable bringing up personal or family issues with my manager.	
	SQ_6 My supervisor really cares about the effects that work demands have on my personal and family life.	
Job Autonomy	JA_1 I have the freedom to decide what I do on my job.	(Suifan et al., 2016)
	JA_2 I have a lot of say about what happens on my job.	
	JA_3 I decide when I take breaks	
	JA_6 It is basically my own responsibility to decide how my job gets done.	
Work-Life Balance	WLB_1 My current job does not interrupt my family life	(Fayyazi & Aslani, 2015)
	WLB_2 The overtime of my current job is reasonable	
	WLB_3 The workload of my current job is reasonable	
Employee Turnover Intention	ETI_1 As soon as it is possible, I will leave the lodge/hotel where I work at.	(Huang et al., 2007)
	ETI_2 I am actively searching for alternatives to the lodge/hotel I work at.	
	ETI_3 If I do not get promoted soon, I will look for a job elsewhere.	
	ETI_4 I intend to leave this lodge/hotel within a short period of time.	
	ETI_5 I often think about leaving this lodge/hotel to work for another employer.	
	BI_6 I do not think I will spend my entire career with this lodge/hotel.	

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